

**UWM POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT**  
**GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
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## QUICK REFERENCE

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### WEB RESOURCES

UWM Political Science

<https://uwm.edu/political-science/>

UWM Graduate School

<https://uwm.edu/graduateschool/>

### PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook is designed to provide graduate students in Political Science guidance for developing and carrying out a program of study and a resource for the policies and procedures that govern the graduate student program.

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## GRADUATE STUDIES IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

The Department of Political Science offers graduate programs of study in political science with concentrations in four fields: American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, and Political Theory.

In the Ph.D. program, the departmental emphasis is on conceptual and quantitative work, as well as sophisticated writing analysis. Students interested in a PhD will gain highly specialized research skills to conduct independent, theoretically and empirically grounded work. The graduate of the program is qualified for a career in university teaching, in government service or in the private sector where the analytical skills and knowledge of the social scientist are required.

The master's program is designed to provide students with basic grounding in the scope and methodology of the discipline, while at the same time allowing maximum flexibility in developing a program of study that will meet students' career objectives. Programs of study are also available to prepare students for such career fields as governmental service, public education, community service, and private industry.

The Department accommodates the master's student who attends part-time by scheduling sufficient graduate-level courses in the late afternoons and evenings to enable the student to earn a master's degree through part-time attendance.

In developing an appropriate and coherent program of study, each graduate student works closely with the major professor and committee of advisers.

Graduate degrees are conferred based on a level of achievement which is acquired by independent reading and research as well as by taking courses. They are never conferred solely on the basis of prescribed courses and residency requirements.

## DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Our graduate program is committed to creating and nurturing an environment in which each student can thrive and contribute to the program and to the university. Our goal is to facilitate the excellence in scholarship for which our graduate students are known. Diversity enhances the learning potential in our classrooms, inspires and enriches our research, and improves the social climate of our classes, the department and the university. Our students, faculty and staff come from a variety of backgrounds, circumstances, and identities, and they have diverse strengths. We recognize and respect differences across these dimensions, realizing that our concept of diversity and our attempts to create an inclusive climate will evolve as we welcome new members to our group. We are committed to adapting practices in our scholarship and our classrooms to increase the participation and hence the contributions of persons who bring diverse perspectives and experiences to the pursuit of knowledge.

## GRADUATE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

### ***DIRECTOR OF GRADUATE STUDIES (DGS)***

The DGS oversees the department's graduate program in accordance with departmental and Graduate School expectations. The DGS is responsible for chairing the department's graduate studies committee, managing the admission and recruitment process of new graduate students, and performing various other duties associated with our MA and PhD programs.

### ***ADVISOR(S)***

The student-advisor relationship is at the heart of the graduate experience. Therefore, it is important to achieve a productive mentoring relationship with your advisor. For PhD students, you will need to choose a *dissertation advisor* prior to taking preliminary exams and writing your dissertation prospectus. This faculty member will be the person to mentor you through the dissertation process.

### ***GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE (GSC)***

The Graduate Studies Committee is appointed by the chair at the beginning of each year and led by the Director of Graduate Studies. The GSC meets at least once a semester and discusses topics and issues pertaining to the graduate program.

## **THE DOCTORATE PROGRAM**

# DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

## INTRODUCTION

The PhD program in Political Science is designed to prepare students for a wide variety of careers in college and university teaching, research, and public service. While emphasizing the scientific study of politics, the department recognizes and incorporates a range of contemporary approaches to the acquisition of knowledge about politics. In this spirit, the PhD program attempts to combine a broadly based orientation to the discipline, which enables students to make intelligent choices of those lines of inquiry most suitable to careers and intellectual concerns.

## ADMISSION

An applicant must meet general Graduate School requirements plus these departmental requirements:

- a. Evidence of a high standard of achievement in bachelor's or previous graduate work.
- b. Three letters of recommendation from people familiar with the applicant's scholastic ability and achievements.
- c. Personal statement of research interests and how UWM's Political Science Department will help you meet your career and educational goals.
- d. Writing sample.

Each applicant is judged individually on the basis all application materials. A personal interview is not required, though applicants who have been offered admission are encouraged to visit the department, so that they can speak with faculty members and current students.



## **COURSE OF STUDY**

A minimum degree requirement is 54 graduate credits beyond the bachelor's degree, 27 of which must be earned in residence at UWM at the doctoral level.

### ***AREAS OF CONCENTRATION***

In consultation with the DGS, students plan a program of studies through which a high level of competence is gained in two substantive fields (hereafter referred to as “major” or “prelim” fields). The department offers four fields of study: American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, and Political Theory.

Competence in these fields is demonstrated by a written preliminary examination. In addition to the fields listed above, students may petition the graduate committee to be examined in an alternative field. This must be a coherent field that is not covered by one of the existing prelim areas.

### ***DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENT***

To ensure broad exposure to the discipline, students must take a minimum of three courses outside of their prelim fields, at least two of which must be in a single field. Courses used to satisfy this requirement must be taken from the departmental offerings in the five substantive fields described above at the 700 level or above. Courses that bridge two or more fields of study cannot be used to satisfy this requirement if one of those fields falls within a student's prelim areas.

## **CORE RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS**

Attainment of the Ph.D. denotes a high level of competence in the research skills relevant to the discipline of political science. Thus, all students must complete the core departmental research seminars Political Science 700, 701, and 702. Since skills learned in these courses are important elements in dealing successfully with subject matter presented in other seminars, students should enroll in these seminars immediately upon entering the graduate program.

Students must earn three additional credits in research methodology. The recommended course in the Department is POL SCI 935. Due to scheduling issues or specific research methodology interests and/or language competency needs, courses from another Department may be approved.

Students selecting a course from outside the Department of Political Science to satisfy this requirement may enroll on a “Credit/No Credit” basis, where the grade of “Credit” demonstrates satisfactory completion of the requirement. Upon successful petition to the departmental Graduate Committee a student may gain exemption from this requirement based on course work completed in the five years prior to entering the

graduate program. Credits earned to meet this requirement may count toward the 54 credits of work required for the Ph.D. if they carry graduate credit and are taken for a grade.

In some cases, competence in foreign language skills is necessary for significant disciplinary research. Students may fulfill the research requirements beyond Political Science 700, 701, and 702 through demonstration of a reading knowledge of one foreign language. Competence is established by examination through an appropriate UWM language department, where the student must perform at a level equivalent to six semesters of college level work in the language.

## **TRANSFER OF CREDITS**

Credits from other institutions, other than those credits earned for a master's degree, cannot be transmitted into the Ph.D. program. For students admitted with a master's degree, up to 30 graduate credits included as part of the master's degree may be counted toward the Ph.D. with program approval. The Graduate committee considers the substantive course requirements for successful completion of the PhD at UWM to be more important than the number of credits. In other words, we may ask students to repeat courses they have taken during their master's work to ensure competency in core course in their field of study.

A total of 54 graduate credits beyond the bachelor's degree are required. Twenty-seven graduate credits must be earned at UWM (in residence) subsequent to obtaining doctoral student status.

A graduate student who has withdrawn from the program and subsequently applied for readmission will be subject to full review by the Graduate Committee if for one or more semesters that person has had a GPA below 3.0. Students will remain in good standing if a 3.0 GPA is maintained, but the degree requirement will not be satisfied until at least a B- grade is earned in all required courses.

## DISSERTATOR STATUS

***Dissertator Status*** is a formal designation (recognized by both the department and the university) whereby an act of the department certifies that a Ph.D. student may enter the final stage of training, which is the research and writing associated with a dissertation. To enter into this status, a student must satisfy two requirements:

1. The student must successfully complete the preliminary examination process.
2. The student must have an acceptable plan for conducting their dissertation research. This is known as the dissertation prospectus.

## THE PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

The semester immediately following a student's final semester of coursework shall be known as the prelim semester.

Examinations will normally be held twice a year: once in the fall semester and once in the spring semester. Each field is a two-day exam, and students will take both field exams over the course of two weeks. Exams will be administered on the first full week, Monday and Tuesday, of each semester.

The preliminary examination process consists of written exams in each of the student's two fields of study. An oral defense of the dissertation proposal will also be conducted at the end of the prelim semester. If a student successfully completes only one of the two field exams, the exam in the unsuccessful field may be repeated during the following semester without retaking the exam in the other field.

The Department Chair will name one faculty member in each exam field as field coordinator. This person shall have the responsibility to compile the exam after inviting questions from other faculty in the field. The field coordinator is also responsible for selecting a committee of faculty in the field to grade the exam. Field examination committees shall consist of at least three faculty members.

## SCHEDULING THE EXAM

Preliminary examinations should be completed no later than the seventh semester of full-time residency beyond the M.A.

Students wishing to take preliminary exams must petition the department in the semester prior. Permission to take prelims will be determined on the basis of a review of previous coursework in the exam fields and in consultation with the prospective dissertation advisor.

Eligibility to take the Ph.D. preliminary examinations during a particular semester is contingent upon clearing all incomplete grades in courses required for doctoral candidacy.

In addition to these departmental requirements, the *Application for the Doctoral Preliminary Examination* form must be filed with the graduate school.

Students who have been granted permission to take preliminary exams are only allowed to cancel the exam only in extreme circumstances. A request to withdraw from scheduled prelims must be approved by the graduate committee.

### **ADMINISTRATION OF THE EXAMS**

The written exams are two-day, closed book exams. Students are allowed to bring in bibliographies (one per subfield), sent to the Graduate Director one week prior to the first set of exams.

On each day, the morning exams will start at 9:00 am and end at noon. The afternoon exam will begin at 1:00 pm and end at 4:00 pm.

Answers to each essay should demonstrate analytical skills as well as substantive knowledge. Students should answer all parts of each question, show an integrative and comprehensive understanding of the relevant issues, develop a coherent thesis supported by relevant arguments and evidence, and write clearly. Essays should also display a reasonable command of the relevant literature, but familiarity with the literature will not make up for a badly reasoned answer.

There is no page limitation, and formal footnoting is not required. Matters of interpretation and detail in administering the examinations will be dealt with by the examination committee or, if they raise policy questions, referred to and decided by the Graduate Committee.

See Appendix for Field-Specific instructions for prelims.

### **EXAMINATION CONTENT**

Students are responsible for the substantive, methodological, and theoretical content of the two examination fields which they select for written examination (see section C).

The exams should not be perceived as covering specific courses or seminar work, but as tests of disciplinary fields. No specific seminar is recommended as requisite to taking the exams and there is no specific minimum number of seminars that should be taken prior to testing in a field.

Students are encouraged to discuss faculty expectations for satisfactory performance with individual faculty members and to consult past examinations kept on file in the department office.

The examinations will be comprehensive with respect to the subject matter of each field and allow for a reasonable range of choice among questions to be answered.

### **GRADING**

The written exams will be graded promptly (usually within one week) by members of the field examination committees. Students will be given grades of “pass” or “fail.”

Any exam given a grade of “fail” must be retaken during the next semester, and students are given only one opportunity to retake a prelim exam. Failure of the retest means the student is no longer allowed to continue in the doctoral program.

All decisions on preliminary examinations are the collective responsibility of the examination committee. Individual committee members may choose to discuss their personal assessment of an examinee’s performance with the examinee if they wish to do so; however, committee members are expected to keep the votes and comments of other committee members confidential.

Field coordinators shall convey the committee’s collective judgment of the grade in that field. Dissertation committee members hearing the oral defense of the prospectus shall convey whether or not the prospectus is approved. Formal notification of examination performance will come from the Chair of the department.

Students may appeal their exam grades in writing to the field examination Committee(s). Further appeal may be made to the department Graduate Committee.

## THE DISSERTATION PROSPECTUS

To ensure a smooth transition between the preliminary exam and dissertation stages, the department requires each student to prepare a dissertation prospectus constituting the student's plan for conducting and completing their dissertation research. This document should be prepared with the guidance of the student's major professor.

There are two deadlines for the dissertation prospectus:

1. The first draft of the prospectus must be completed by the end of the semester preceding the prelim semester.
2. The final prospectus must be defended by the end of the prelim semester.

The steps for completion of the prospectus are as follows:

1. Before the final semester of coursework, the student chooses a dissertation advisor to direct his or her dissertation research. This choice is registered with the Graduate Committee.
2. During the last semester of coursework, each prospective dissertator will enroll for research credit (POL SCI 990) with his or her dissertation advisor as instructor. This course provides the instructional framework within which the student drafts the dissertation proposal.
3. By the end of the final semester of course work, each prospective dissertator, in consultation with the dissertation advisor, will establish a dissertation committee consisting (at this stage) of at least three faculty members from the Department of Political Science. (The two "readers" that fill out a fully constituted dissertation committee may be selected later; see point five below). Upon completion of the draft prospectus, the major professor will distribute copies to the other (two) initial members of the dissertation committee.
4. During the student's prelim semester, committee members will review their prospectus and offer written suggestions for revisions. The dissertation advisor will collect these commentaries and give them to the student once he or she has passed both written preliminary examinations.
5. In the period between the completion of the prelim and the end of that semester (*the prelim semester*), the student will revise the dissertation prospectus in the light of committee comments and schedule an oral defense of the prospectus before his or her dissertation committee.

The oral examination committee shall be named on the Graduate School form entitled "Application for the Doctoral Preliminary Examination". At this stage, the dissertation committee chair may (in his or her discretion and in consultation with the student) appoint the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> members of the committee and invite them to participate in the prospectus defense. However, it is often the case that the fourth and fifth members of the dissertation committee are not appointed until the dissertation nears completion.

Having successfully defended the dissertation prospectus and passed the preliminary examination, the student will be elevated to dissertator status.

## **THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION**

The purpose of the doctoral dissertation in political science is to provide the student with an opportunity to (1) investigate a problem in greater detail than has been possible at any previous point in their graduate career, (2) demonstrate his/her ability to perform original research, and (3) transmit the written findings and conclusions to others. Originality is defined broadly to allow the student considerable scope in the nature of their contribution to scholarship. Dissertation projects may be designed to criticize or reformulate problems that have concerned students of politics for decades, to replicate or extend previous research, to formulate an original theoretical statement, or to conduct an empirical investigation of significant questions.

### ***DISSERTATION***

The candidate, working under the supervision of the major professor and the candidate's dissertation committee, must write an acceptable dissertation. Guidelines for preparation of the dissertation are available from The Graduate School and from the departmental Graduate Committee Chair.

### ***DISSERTATION DEFENSE***

The candidate must, as a final step toward the degree, pass an oral examination in defense of the dissertation. The candidate who does not successfully defend a thesis within five years of admission to candidacy may be required to take another comprehensive preliminary examination and be readmitted to candidacy.

### ***TIME LIMIT***

All degree requirements must be completed within ten years from the date of initial enrollment in the doctoral program.



## **MASTER OF ARTS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE**

# MASTER OF ARTS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

## *INTRODUCTION*

The master's program is designed to provide students with basic grounding in the scope and methodology of the discipline, while at the same time allowing maximum flexibility in developing a program of study that will meet students' career objectives. It is recommended that students preparing themselves for Ph.D. work emphasize empirical theory, quantitative skills and strategies and techniques of conducting research. Programs of study are also available to prepare students for such career fields as governmental service, public education, community service, and private industry. In developing an appropriate and coherent program of study, each graduate student works closely with the major professor and committee of advisers.

## *ADMISSION*

An applicant who meets general Graduate School requirements plus these departmental requirements may be admitted in good standing:

- Undergraduate major or substantial work in the field of Political Science.
- Undergraduate grade point average of at least 3.0 (4.0 scale).
- Three letters of recommendation from persons familiar with the applicant's scholastic ability and achievements.

## *ADVISORS*

Incoming students will be advised by the DGS. Prior to writing their master's thesis, students will select a major professor to chair their thesis committee.

## *CREDITS AND COURSES*

Minimum degree requirement is 30 graduate credits, 24 of which must be in political science and six of which may be in related fields, ALL OF WHICH must be taken at the 700 level or above.

All students will take three courses dealing with the scope and method of political inquiry.

- a. Political Science 700 should be taken during the first semester.
- b. Political Science 701 should be taken during the first semester.
- c. Political Science 702 should be taken during the second semester.

Satisfaction of this degree requirement requires grades of B- or higher in 700, 701, and 702.

## ***TRANSFER OF CREDITS***

At the M.A. level, the Graduate School will receive petitions for transfer of a maximum of six credits that have not been used to meet requirements for a degree previously awarded to the candidate provided that (a) the student's adviser recommends approval, and (b) the student submits a supporting statement explaining the relevance to the student's graduate program in political science of the courses for which credit is sought. The Graduate School will forward the request to the department for final action by the Political Science Graduate Committee.

The department may count toward a current graduate degree only a limited number of course equivalents taken at UWM in political science during a lapsed prior enrollment. The Graduate Committee must be satisfied of the continuing relevance of any course work for which such credit is to be granted.

A graduate student who has withdrawn from the program and subsequently applied for readmission will be subject to full review by the Graduate Committee if for one or more semesters that person has had a GPA below 3.0. Students will remain in good standing if a 3.0 GPA is maintained, but the degree requirement will not be satisfied until at least a B- grade is earned in all required courses.

## ***THESIS***

A formal thesis is not required. However, each student will prepare and orally defend a paper that demonstrates conceptual ability and research competence in some recognized area (sub-field) of political science. It is expected that the MA paper will be prepared in a scholarly fashion, normally conforming to the format characteristic of journal articles published in the chosen area of study. In preparing theses, students should follow the APSA style guide.

Full-time students are expected to successfully defend the master's paper prior to the completion of four semesters of graduate work. Consequently, the Department encourages students to choose paper topics for graduate seminars which may serve as the basis for the master's paper. Postponement of the oral defense of the master's paper beyond four semesters requires the approval of the Graduate Committee.

## ***COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION***

An oral defense of the master's paper is required. Master's papers will be defended orally before a three-person committee composed of the student's adviser and two other faculty members selected by the chair of the Department in consultation with the student and the adviser.

The Committee will be selected at least one full semester prior to anticipated submission of the master's paper. The student must obtain committee approval of the research topic and methodology immediately following the selection of the committee.

There is no formal deadline for turning in a final draft of the master's paper to the committee chairperson; however, it is recommended that a copy of the paper be submitted to the graduate committee chairperson at least a month in advance of the paper defense date.

A student must enroll for AT LEAST three credit hours of POL SCI 990 for final preparation of the paper.

### ***TIME LIMIT***

The student must complete all degree requirements within five years of initial enrollment.

## GENERAL GRADUATE POLICIES

## SCHEDULING COMPLETION OF MA AND PHD DEGREES

### FULL-TIME STUDENTS

Normally, nine credits per semester is full-time load. Full-time graduate students should meet the following schedules of completion for graduate work in political science. (The University requires completion of the M.A. degree within five years of initial enrollment.)

- a. *Master of Arts Degree*: requirements should be completed in two academic years.
- b. *Ph.D. Comprehensive Examinations*: should be completed not later than the seventh semester of full-time graduate work beyond the M.A.
- c. *Ph.D. Dissertations*: every effort should be made to complete Ph.D. dissertations within one year after passing comprehensive examinations. (The University requires completion within 5 years.)

### PART-TIME STUDENTS

Part-time is defined as (a) a maximum of six hours per semester, (b) while engaged in gainful employment more than half-time.

- a. Students admitted to the doctoral program of the Political Science Department may pursue their studies on a part-time basis. However, the student must meet minimum Graduate School residence requirements as defined in the Graduate Student and Faculty Handbook.
- b. It is standard Graduate School policy to drop from the program students who do not take at least one course during two consecutive semesters (summer not counted). Such students may reapply to the program. (See the Graduate Student and Faculty Handbook)

## FELLOWSHIP NOMINATIONS

The Political Science Graduate Committee annually considers applications for graduate fellowships. The schedule for such applications is set by the Graduate School and final selections are made by a university-wide Fellowship Committee.

Three principal forms of fellowship aid are available:

1. Distinguished Dissertator Fellowships
2. Distinguished Graduate Student Fellowship
3. Advanced Opportunity Fellowship

The applications for these are usually due in early January, so, well before then, interested students should make an application, in accordance with the guidelines listed on the Graduate School's website, to the Director of Graduate Studies. The Graduate Committee will choose up to two departmental nominees from among these applications for the Distinguished Graduate Student and Distinguished Dissertator Fellowships and up to five departmental nominees for the Advanced Opportunity Fellowship.

All of these categories of assistance are reviewed in the UWM Graduate Student and Faculty Handbook

## **TEACHING ASSISTANT APPOINTMENTS**

Appointments to Teaching Assistantships are the major source of departmentally controlled assistance to graduate students. TA appointments are made by the Department Chair in consultation with the Graduate Committee Chair, and within guidelines established by the Graduate Committee. The number of TA positions available is variable, subject to budget and enrollment constraints and to faculty research leaves. Research Assistantships and Project Assistantships may also be available and appointments to these are made by the faculty members engaged in funded research.

Teaching assistant appointments entitles one to fringe benefits. TAs and prospective TAs are advised to consult the Administrative Guidelines for the Appointment of Graduate Student Staff, published annually by the UWM Graduate School.

## **THE GRADUATE COMMITTEE GUIDELINES FOR TA APPOINTMENTS**

1. The determinative considerations in making financial awards are academic merit and strengthening the Department's Ph.D. program. Thus, only Ph.D. candidates are awarded TA positions.
2. Teaching assistantships and nominations for fellowships are awarded based on GPA (factoring into account the quality of the student's undergraduate and/or MA institution), letters of recommendation, and fit with the department's academic program and needs. Academic performance in the program, previous performance as a TA, and departmental needs will be taken into account when department TAs seek continued support.
3. Awards to Ph.D. students will be at the 50% level.
4. Post-prelim Ph.D. candidates are not guaranteed TA appointments, which are made subject to availability, departmental need, appropriateness of student specializations, student performance in prelims, and faculty evaluations.
5. Students cannot reasonably expect continued TA appointments as they approach or after they have exceeded the schedule for completion of work towards a Ph.D. degree.
6. TA positions are held subject to continued good standing in the Department of Political Science, and progress toward the degree. These are standard provisions in letters of offer to students.



## REVIEW OF STUDENT PROGRESS

### GOOD STANDING/GOOD PROGRESS

Good progress is reflected in strong academic grades, timely completion of incompletes, passing comprehensive exams in a timely manner, defending a prospectus at or around the end of the third year, and continued progress toward completion of the dissertation.

To be in good academic standing in the Graduate School, a student must maintain a graduate cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 or better in all graduate credit courses and must maintain reasonable progress toward Graduate School or graduate program requirements.

Students receiving an assistantship are expected to be full-time students (9 credits/semester until after prelims), and attend all graduate professionalization workshops and Department meetings.

For students whose GPA falls below a 3.0, see the Graduate School Handbook for information about Requests for Exemption.

### SELECTING ADVISERS

The DGS is the default advisor for all new M.A. and Ph.D. students.

Students are encouraged to select a major advisor on the basis of shared interests as soon as possible in their academic careers. The initial advising assignments are not intended to be permanent; they are an interim arrangement until the student is able to make an informed choice.

The graduate director assists new students in this selection process.

Proposed Schedules should be cleared with Advisers in Advance. Graduate students are obliged to consult with their advisers prior to enrolling in courses and seminars at the beginning of each semester.

### EVALUATING GRADUATE STUDENT COURSE/SEMINAR PERFORMANCE

Professors conducting seminars, or who have graduate students enrolled in classes, complete evaluation forms for graduate students concurrently with grading. Such evaluations are prepared and submitted for students receiving Incompletes as well as for those receiving letter grades.

Student progress will be periodically evaluated by the graduate director and the graduate committee, depending on the students' progress towards their degree and program of study.

PhD students will be evaluated at the end of their first year with the goal of assessing progress towards degree. They will also be evaluated at the end of their second year with the goal of determining whether they will be allowed to continue with the PhD program or asked to leave, with or without a terminal MA degree.

## **STUDENT ACCESS TO EVALUATIONS**

Seminar and class evaluations are distributed to the student's advisor and are placed in the student's file.

Students are encouraged to take the initiative in reviewing course evaluations in a meeting with their advisers. In such a meeting, advisers should apprise students of any performance issues evident from a review of current and past evaluations.

Graduate Students are also entitled to examine their individual files. Access will be granted upon request by the student to the graduate secretary or the student's adviser. All file contents – except materials considered confidential due to waiver of access rights by the student – will be made available on such request. However, students must review their files within the departmental office.

## **DISMISSAL**

The academic performance of students on probation is reviewed by the Graduate Committee each semester. This review involves an analysis of each student's grades, course selection, and comments from their instructors. The Committee may recommend that students not continue in the program when academic problems indicate that successful program completion is highly unlikely.

For students who fail to perform satisfactorily on the criteria listed above, the Graduate Committee may take any of the following actions:

- a. Terminate or reduce the student's financial aid.
- b. Dismiss the student from the program.
- c. Dismiss the student from the program and/or award the student a terminal MA degree (PhD Students).
- d. Place the student on probationary status.

## **INCOMPLETES** (UWM Graduate School Policy)

It is your responsibility to initiate a request for an Incomplete. Reasons for requesting an Incomplete in a course must be acceptable to the instructor. If approved, the instructor will indicate the conditions for the removal of the Incomplete, including the dates for submitting all remaining work. The instructor may deny a request for an Incomplete and assign a letter grade based on the work completed at that point. An Incomplete is appropriate only when one of the following conditions is present:

- You have done satisfactory work in a substantial fraction of the course requirements prior to grading time and provide the instructor with evidence of potential success in completing the remaining work.
- Extraordinary circumstances, not related to class performance, such as an illness or family emergency, have prevented you from finishing the course requirements on time.

An Incomplete will not be given to enable you to do additional work to improve your grade. You are responsible for seeing that the Incomplete is removed before the agreed deadline and that the instructor has reported the grade to the Graduate School. The instructor may change the I to a letter grade (including F) or to a PI (Permanent Incomplete) if you fail to meet the deadline for completion.

## PROCEDURES FOR APPEALS OF GRADUATE COMMITTEE DECISIONS

There are two potential steps to the Department-level appeals process and one Graduate School step if a student is dropped for unsatisfactory academic performance or receives another adverse decision from the Graduate Committee.

- Step 1. The student may ask the Graduate Committee to reconsider its decision. The request for reconsideration must be in writing within 30 working days of the initial decision, of which the student will be given notification in writing.
- Step 2. The Graduate Committee's reconsideration may be appealed to a three-person ad hoc committee appointed by the Political Science Chair. Such an appeal must be in writing within 15 working days of the decision concerning reconsideration, of which the student will be notified in writing. The student will also be notified of their right to appear before this body, to present evidence in support of the appeal, and of the time and place of the meeting. The ad hoc committee will be selected from members of the Political Science Department's Graduate Faculty who are not current members of the Graduate Committee. The ad hoc committee shall study the record, hear the evidence, and make a recommendation in writing to the Chair.
- Step 3. (Graduate School) If the decision at step two is negative, the student may, within 10 working days from the date of notification of that decision, appeal to the dean of the Graduate School. The student must provide information on the reason for appeal, substantial evidence in support of the appeal, and the solution sought. All documentation must be forwarded to the Graduate School's associate dean for academic programs. The associate dean reviews the case and forwards the appeal with a recommendation to the dean of the Graduate School.

The student may elect to skip step 1 and go directly to step 2. In that case, their shall have 30 working days to appeal.

## APPENDIX

## AMERICAN POLITICS PRELIMINARY EXAM

The goal of comprehensive exam in American Politics is to measure your synthesized understanding of several classic and current scholarly work and/or debates. While students are expected to be familiar with important seminal work, it would be much more important to demonstrate their own interpretation that connects across multiple scholarly conversations in a given research question.

### COURSEWORK

Student must take two core seminars: 749 (American Political Institutions) and 750 (American Political Behavior).

In addition, students must take three additional courses:

- 725 - Judicial Politics and Behavior
- 913 - Urban Politics
- 926 - Legislative Politics
- 929 - Voting Behavior
- 974 - Public Policy

### PREPARATION

Before students start to study for comprehensive exam (e.g., several months before the exam), it is highly recommended to setup a meeting with the chair of American Politics comprehensive exam committee (currently Associate Professor Hong Min Park).

Students are expected to bring the list of American politics courses that they have taken so far, and the meeting will help students to learn more semester-specific information on the exam.

### TEST

The exam consists of two days: the first day for institutions and the second day for behavior. In the past, there were questions that students should answer, and some other questions could be chosen by students from the provided list.

It is very important to note that American Politics comprehensive exam is not designed to test student's memorization. Rather, it aims to measure student's critical assessment of literature on the subject. So, students will be asked to bring paper copy of bibliography that includes at least author(s) and year (more information TBA).

### RESULT

Students' answers will be evaluated by all three American Politics comprehensive exam committee members. They will not be graded: there is either pass or fail. If the latter, the students will be informed of specific concerns in their answers—these will need to be corrected if students wish to attempt the exam a second time.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS PRELIMINARY EXAM

On the prelim exam, you will be given a list of questions drawn from multiple subfields in international relations. The main subfields are international and ethnic conflict, international political economy, and foreign policy decision making. Questions in the subfields may also have methodological elements or components, which seek to test your ability to address general methodological issues arising in connection with subfield-focused questions.

Each answer should be **well organized**, should **speak directly to the question asked**, and should **cite and draw upon the relevant literature** (even when the question does not specifically instruct you to do so). Answers that simply summarize literature (without analysis) or that present arguments without evidence are not likely to be evaluated favorably. Among other things, we are interested in knowing that you can make effective use of your knowledge of the literature, so be sure to **integrate the relevant literature in all answers**.

We are looking for clear summaries of relevant literature, organized well to address the specific questions. These literatures should be analyzed for logical coherence and evaluated using the most relevant and compelling evidence.

When a question asks you to address a number of smaller issues, be careful to cover all of the issues in your answer.

**Above all, be certain that in each case you have answered the question(s) that WE have asked.**

## COMPARATIVE COURSES PRELIMINARY EXAM

The CP field is very broad, and the courses offered at UWM do not fully cover the breadth of knowledge in the subfield. (We expect that the CP Prelim Exam demonstrates such knowledge.) As such, students need to read beyond their course syllabi so they are up to date on contemporary research debates and areas not covered by coursework. Students should consult with Professors Reuter and Sugiyama for guidance on topics and readings beyond coursework. In some cases, an independent study to review material or identify missing gaps may be warranted.

Regarding the 'essential' UWM CP courses, the field seminar by Prof. Reuter provides a broad overview. This course is considered very important and foundational. Two topical courses, Authoritarianism and Democratization (aka Developing Nations), cover broad questions related to regime change and features of regime type. Mastery of this subject matter is also considered to be essential for successful completion of the exam.

The newly developed CP course, Methodological and Theoretical Issues of Comparative Politics, is also designed to help students think critically about the research enterprise in CP, assess the literature, and help students design their own studies.

Other courses, such as Comparative Public Policy, rotate every 2 or 3 years. If a student takes this course, it still 'counts' toward the CP exam in the sense we would include a question on the exam that they can answer based on the material from that course.

If PhD students come to UWM from other MA programs, they should meet with CP faculty to discuss their previous coursework. Even if a student has previously completed courses in CP elsewhere, we may want them to take our courses with us here. Consultation with faculty in CP is needed in these cases.

To sum, students taking the CP exam will want to take at least 4 courses and read independently beyond their coursework. Supplemental independent studies are frequently offered if a student misses the sequence of coursework they need to successfully complete the exam. We also offer formal and informal guidance on reading beyond the coursework. We encourage students to meet with us regularly and to study as cohort.

**\*\* Important: All CP PhD students should **meet at least once** with Professors Reuter and Sugiyama every semester. Make a plan to attend their office hours, even if not enrolled in one of their graduate seminars. \*\***

### LIST OF CP COURSES:

715 – Intro to CP1  
716 – Intro to CP2  
720 – Theoretical and Methodological  
Issues of CP

952 – Developing Nations  
975 – Comparative Authoritarianism  
976 – Comparative Public Policy



## POLITICAL THEORY PRELIMINARY EXAM

The point of comprehensive exams is simple: they aim to measure your capacity to write cogently and convincingly on topics across the subfield. Ideally, they relate to your dissertation, but their main purpose is to verify your abilities in understanding concepts, authors, and research approaches in your chosen area of study.

In political theory, this entails the capacity to make sense of divergent theoretical traditions, schools of thought, and ideas. Your “comps” therefore ask you to answer particular questions showing your familiarity with the overarching issues and figures in political philosophy.

### PREPARATION

Before you begin your comps, you should be familiar with the general content and ideas from three lists, each of between 20 and 25 entries. The first of these will consist of political philosophers from what is often called the “Western Canon;” examples would be Plato and Rousseau. The second list will be of a variety of important political concepts, such as “populism” and “fascism.” The third list will be particular to each student, which you will develop with your dissertation advisor in the months leading up to your comps, drawn from your particular course, reading, and research history.

You need not have these memorized; you will not be asked to identify specific pages or chapters, and you will not need to quote authors. But you should enter the test with your specific interpretation and understanding of each item on each list.

### THE TEST

Your comprehensive questions will consist of six questions, four of which you will be required to answer. Each question will be drawn from all three lists, and will ask you to explain relationships, affinities, or differences.

The test will occur at the beginning of the semester of your choice. You will have two sequential days, over the course of two days between the hours of 9:00 am and 4:00 pm, to answer these questions. You will be allowed to bring paper copies of all three lists with you for your reference.

You will be answering these questions from memory, you will not be expected to supply specific dates or quotations. As the purpose of the test is to show an

understanding of the ideas, thinkers, and concepts, you will not be judged on easily-corrected issues such as spelling or picayune details. Instead, focus on answering the questions creatively, insightfully, and accurately.

## **THE RESULTS**

Your answers will be evaluated by Ivan Ascher, Kennan Ferguson, and a third faculty member selected by Ascher and Ferguson as befitting your area of focus. You will not be graded; you will either pass or fail. If the latter, you should consult closely with all three evaluators concerning areas of concern if you wish to attempt the comps a second time.